



# **HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FIREWORKS ARE ILLEGAL IN HOUSTON AND PARTS OF COUNTY**

The Houston Fire Department and the Harris County Fire Marshal Office remind citizens that it is illegal to possess or discharge fireworks in the City of Houston as well as in the Limited Purpose Annexation areas of Harris County.

The Harris County Commissioner's Court has also approved a ban on all aerial fireworks in Harris County Dec. 20, 2005 – Jan. 1, 2006.

The fines for possessing or discharging fireworks range from \$500 - \$2000 for each occurrence. As each case will be evaluated by a judge to determine the amount of the fine. Warnings are no longer issued due to the serious dangers that exist when fireworks are discharged within the community.

City of Houston and Harris County Fire Inspectors and Arson Investigators will be on patrol to enforce the laws and to answer questions. All illegally possessed fireworks will be confiscated. If a minor is caught with fireworks, the parent or guardian will receive a citation even if they were unaware of the minor's possession and/or usage.

Limited Purpose Annexation areas are areas which the City has executed an agreement (called a Strategic Partnership Agreement) with a utility district. The agreement specifies: what property the city will annex, what percentage, if any, of the increase in sales tax that the city shares with the utility district, what, if any services the city will provide, and the length of the agreement, and what may happen when it expires.

In each agreement, the city agrees to annex exclusively commercial property, and in most cases it is agreed to split the sales tax proceeds 50/50 with the MUD. In recent agreements the City agreed to provide the Fireworks Ban as the only service. Also, in most cases the length of the agreement is 30 years, at which time, the city may 1) annex the remaining portion of the district, 2) extend the agreement, or 3) walk away entirely.

Citizens may find maps of these annexed areas on the HFD website at [www.houstonfire.org](http://www.houstonfire.org).